

Transportation Conformity Working Group Interagency Consultation Meeting Summary

**Tuesday, April, 26, 2005
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

**Southern California Association of Governments
818 W 7th Street, 12th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Riverside 'A' Conference Room**

The Transportation Conformity Working Group (TCWG) held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 26, 2005 at SCAG's downtown offices. The following summary is intended to summarize the matters discussed. An audio recording of the entire meeting is available for review at SCAG's office.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at about 10:00 AM by Chair Ty Schuiling, SANBAG.

2.0 WELCOME AND SELF-INTRODUCTIONS

ATTENDANCE:

In Person: Rosemary Ayala, SCAG
Sandra Balmir, FHWA/FTA
Herman Cheng, MTA
Mike Gainor, SCAG
Ashad Hamideh, MTA
Ted Harris, SCAG
Doug Kim, MTA
Nancy Marroquin, MTA
Jean Mazur, FHWA
Christopher Patton, City of LA
Ty Schuiling, SANBAG
Arnie Sherwood, ITS/UCB
Tahirih Smith, Caltrans
Carla Walecka, TCA
Andy Woods, Caltrans District 7
Sina Zarifi, SCAG

Via Teleconference:

Jennifer Bergener, OCTA
Mike Brady, Caltrans
Paul Fagan, Caltrans District 8
Cathy Gomes, Caltrans
Sandy Johnson, Caltrans District 11
Karina O'Connor, EPA
Chuck Thomas, VCTC
Dennis Wade, CARB

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no public comments at this meeting.

5.0 ACTION ITEMS

5.1 Approval of the February 22, 2005 Meeting Summary

Approved Unanimously.

6.0 INFORMATION ITEMS

6.1 2004 RTIP Update (Rosemary Ayala, SCAG)

Rosemary Ayala (SCAG) presented an update on the 2004 RTIP, reporting that Amendment #6, the STIP reconciliation amendment, was approved by FTA and FHWA on April 4, 2005. SCAG staff are processing Amendment #7, which will be transmitted to the federal approval agencies on May 9, 2005. The County Transportation Commissions are working on Amendment #8, which will consist primarily of FTA 5307 transit projects.

Ms Ayala provided a report describing the RTIP Expedited Project Selection Procedures that will be submitted to the Transportation and Communications subcommittee and the Regional Council for approval on May 5, 2005. These procedures would allow projects from the second and third years of the RTIP to move forward if additional funding becomes available. Caltrans has indicated that, once approved by the SCAG Regional Council, they will review and approve these procedures so they are in place by June 1st. This action would facilitate the programming of additional obligation authority that will become available on that date. Ty Schuiling (SANBAG) mentioned that Calls for Projects (CFP) come in 2 forms: competitive bidding for newly available funding; and the regular RTIP process. He would welcome the opportunity to work with SCAG on language for the document that more clearly makes this distinction. Sandra Balmir (FHWA) requested clarification of Step 3 of the report regarding CTC's amending the RTIP to reflect projects that were advanced in this process. Ms Ayala responded that the RTIP would need to be amended so that everyone knows the project had been delivered in advance. Ms Balmir asserted that the language in Step 3 indicates the CTC's amend the RTIP, and according to federal regulations, only SCAG can amend the RTIP. Step 3 should read "SCAG amends the RTIP".

Ms Ayala directed attention to a second document describing the RTIP amendment approval procedure, which proposes to streamline the approval process for certain types of administrative amendments. Jean Mazur (FHWA) asked what level of conformity documentation is required for SCAG approved amendments. Ted Harris (SCAG) answered that this type of amendment would have no effect on regional emissions analysis and a letter from Mark Pisano would be provided certifying compliance with conformity requirements. Ms Mazur (FHWA) mentioned she would favor the development of a statewide standard for amendment approvals and that the upcoming Statewide Transportation Conformity Working Group meeting might be a good forum for further discussion of the topic.

6.2 RTP Update (Sina Zarifi, SCAG)

Sina Zarifi (SCAG) presented an update on the 2004 RTP, stating that SCAG staff are moving forward on the triennial April, 2007 timeline for development of the 2007 RTP, while still being prepared for any possible changes.

6.3 EPA PM 2.5 Guidance Update (Dave Jesson, US EPA)

Dave Jesson (EPA) reported that the PM 2.5 Implementation Rule will be out by June, 2005 and Phase 2 of the 8-Hour Rule will be released by mid to late summer of this year. The Final PM2.5 Rule will be released by the end of 2005. Arnie Sherwood (ITS/UCB) asked if there would be any revisions regarding retrained dust. Mr Jesson responded that would not happen for awhile.

6.4 2007 AQMP Update (Eyvonne Sells, SCAQMD)

Eyvonne Sells (SCAQMD) provided an update of the 2007 AQMP development process, reporting that preliminary modeling was now in progress. Ty Schuiling asked when the AQMP Working Group would meet. Ms Sells responded that the group would convene in Fall, 2005. Sandra Balmir (FHWA) asked who was preparing the baseline inventory. Ms Sells responded that the modeling groups at SCAQMD and SCAG were working on that. Carla Walecka (TCA) asked if the 2004 RTP would be the baseline document for the 2007 AQMP. Ms Sells replied that it would be.

6.5 Reauthorization Update (Jean Mazur, FHWA)

Jean Mazur (FHWA) had nothing to report regarding federal reauthorization legislation.

6.6 NEPA Update (Jean Mazur, FHWA)

Jean Mazur (FHWA) provided an update on NEPA documentation issues. Ms Mazur indicated that projects that are undergoing NEPA study should be included in the RTIP for informational purposes in order for federal action to be taken. Mike Brady (Caltrans) mentioned that auxiliary lanes are not exempt from the conformity process and that a Caltrans memo to this effect will be emailed to members of the group. Ms Mazur reported that the new 8-hour ozone and PM 2.5 designations should be reflected in NEPA documents. She mentioned that while PM 2.5 hot spot analysis is not yet in place, project sponsors should include it in the NEPA document.

6.7 TCM Monitoring Process (Ted Harris/Mike Gainor, SCAG)

Ted Harris (SCAG) discussed the difference between committed and potential TCM projects and the need to develop long term strategies for implementing and monitoring TCM's in addition to the requirements of the operative SIP. There are more than 300 projects in the 2004 RTIP that are currently classified as TCMs. TCMs are projects developed specifically to improve air quality and include HOV, transit/non-motorized, TDM, or ITS projects. Mr Harris mentioned several areas where SCAG is implementing improvements to the timely implementation reporting process, including detailed project completion date analysis, using the new RTIP database as a TCM management tool, and improved project substitution guidance. Mike Gainor (SCAG) provided a memo describing the TCM Implementation Process, and discussed the current and planned procedures for developing the Timely Implementation report. Eyvonne Sells (SCAQMD) the asked why the 1994 SIP was to be used when the 2003 SIP is available. Mr Harris responded that 2003 SIP has not yet been approved. Sandra Balmir (FHWA) asked when the next TCM Work Group meeting will be held. Ty Schuiling (SANBAG) suggested that it be scheduled after the TCM project analysis is completed. Mr Harris responded that the development of performance outcome based TCM project analysis based on air quality benefits could require multiple TCM meetings. He also mentioned that development of language in the 2007 SIP could allow for more flexibility in TCM designations. Ms Sells asked if there was a procedure to replace TCM projects with composite project features that are rejected. Mr Harris responded that substitution would be used. Mike Brady (Caltrans) suggested that more details on project splitting be discussed.

6.8 Information Sharing (Group Discussion)

Mike Brady (Caltrans) reminded members that the Statewide Transportation Conformity Working Group meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 19th at MTC. Arnie Sherwood (ITS/UCB) suggested that the auxiliary lane issue be put on the agenda for the statewide meeting. Paul Fagan (Caltrans) reported that the Caltrans auxiliary lane memo is included.

4.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Ty Schuiling (SANBAG) presented a plaque to former Chair Doug Kim (MTA) for his service to the Transportation Conformity Working Group.

7.0 COMMENT PERIOD

Chair Ty Schuling (SANBAG) reminded members of the NEPA conference to be held on Monday and Tuesday, May 2-3 at UCI.

8.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:00 Noon.